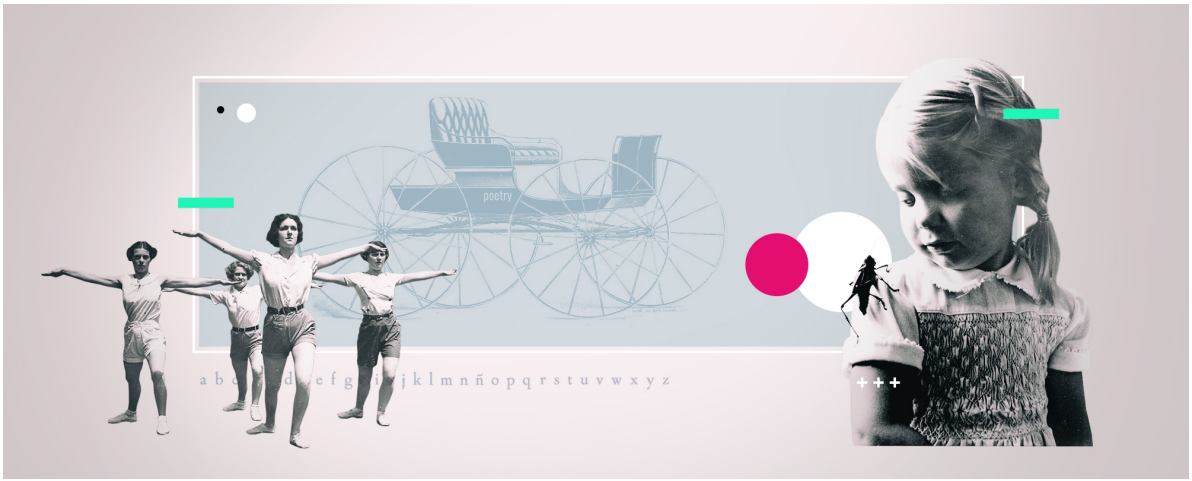
ANTHOLOGY OF FEMINIST POETRY

Leire Bilbao: Removing heads

Leire Bilbao



Removing heads

There are
women's skins that are
stickier than the smell of scales
There are
feminine hands that go right to the guts
without knowing how to empty the insides
There are
bloods that mingle on one's lap
There are
fish that have one's husband's expression
There are
gills one puffs and pants to remove
There are
bodies that have the shuddering of the waves
There are
those that go to bed with the sea
as with an unfaithful lover
There are
women
that cut the heads off the fish as if removing their own.

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Patience

Do not ask me to be as loyal as mirrors
if you cannot see yourself before you,
if you cannot see right inside me
as through a window resigned to staying open.

I am no lizard between cracks,
I have been taught to stay put.

I pass the days patiently,
unaware I am resigned
to hanging on to the house my father gave me.

I know nothing of other's pain unless it is mine.
From my perspective I tell you
not to ask me to be as loyal as mirrors,
I will not move
insofar as my breath orders me to stay.

I have been taught to stay put.

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Bleeding II

I've stained my fingertips with blood
and doubtfully raised them to my mouth.
This blood that shuns my body
has no bitter taste.
My nipples ache
as if asking for lips.
I don't want yours,
I don't want anyone's
I keep them for me.

My inside beats inside demanding answers,
And I've rested a hand on my breast.
You've asked me why I sometimes understand
a lioness better than I understand you.
Now you know why, when my breasts are beating,
I won't let you touch them,
and why I keep them for me.

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I don’t want that

I don't want a mother country that will bury me,
that will put what we yearned to be in my mouth.

I don't want a love that will exhaust me,
that will rise to my neck, only to take revenge.

I don't want a mother to protect me
if I'm not going to have her at my side when time passes.

If I have no mother country, no love, no mother,
whither shall I return?

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Leire Bilbao
Leire Bilbao is a poet and writer. She was born in Ondarroa (Basque Country) in 1978, and has published *Ezkatak* (Susa, 2006), *Scanner* (Susa, 2011) and *Entre escamas* (Marisma, 2018). Some of her poems have been translated into more than a dozen of languages and have been assembled in anthologies such as *Forked Tongues*, *El poder del cuerpo*, *Traslúcidas*, *Las aguas tranquilas* o *Sombras diversas*. Several basque artists have also used Bilbao's poems for their music. In 2017 she was awarded with the Euskadi Prize for her children's book *Xomorropoemak* ("Bugpoems", Kalandraka, 2019), which is published in spanish, galician and catalan.